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Through Generations



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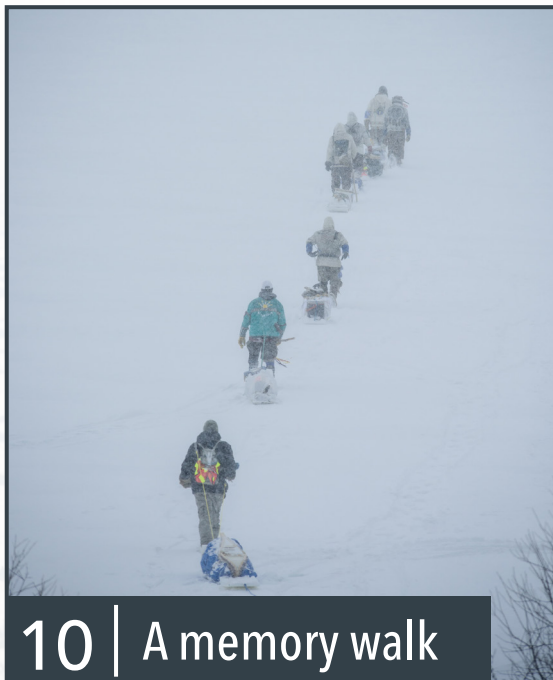
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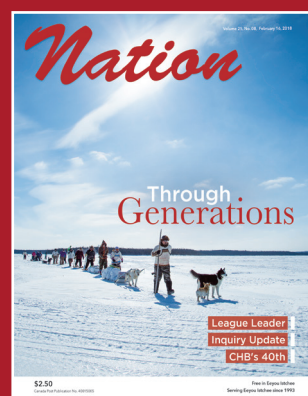


Photo by
Brendan Forward

Abel Kitchen (1943-2018)

by Will Nicholls



It was with sadness the news reached us of the passing of Abel Kitchen.

Abel was a man of many talents and abilities. When the Quebec government announced the “Project of the Century,” a plan to dam Cree lands—he was on hand to ensure the Crees wouldn’t be left by the roadside. When legal actions in the courts failed, he was there to negotiate the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement.

Abel’s legacy is woven into the **very fabric** of Cree life today

The then newly formed Grand Council of the Crees elected Abel as Executive Chief in 1974. Later on

he would become the Chair of the Cree Regional Authority. That was back when the positions of Grand Chief and Chair were separate.

In much the same way Abel’s talents led him to becoming the Chair of Creeco. Later on in life he would become Executive Director of the Cree Board of Health and Social Services. He was also on a working group with the Cree School Board, involved with Elders Council and mentored youth. At one point Abel was the chief of Waswanipi.

It would be hard to find any part of the Cree world that Abel had not touched. In his later years he lived a more traditional lifestyle passing on the torch to the youth who would seek him out for advice.

Perhaps a comment made in Nishiiyuu Ways gives you an idea of the driving force behind the Cree Elder. Abel said, “Emphasize values because I think that’s what drove the system in the old days and that’s probably what is



going to drive the Nishiiyuu Way if we bring it forward.

“Values like, sharing for instance. Those principles also were very important. The whole society was based on helping each other because it was a very tough life, you could say, and what we had in the old days, the only way to survive was to help each other.”

Because of the dedication and commitment Able gave to the Cree Nation, things aren’t as tough as they were. You could say Abel’s legacy is woven into the very fabric of Cree life today. We thank you for that, Abel, and wish you peaceful rest.

Photo by Eric Martin



Eye on the snocross prize

Bosum sleds his way to victory in season’s first event

by Dan Coyle

A Cree rider finished atop the podium as the 2018 snocross season got underway in late January.

Nathaniel Bosum of Oujé-Bougoumou powered his 600cc Arctic-Cat to victory in the Pro 2 category at the Grand Prix Snocross Shawinigan, the first of seven events on this year’s SCMx snocross circuit.

Bosum has high hopes for the 2018 snocross season. The 28-year-old has his eyes on the 2018 riders’ championship after finishing fifth overall on the SCMx Pro standings in 2017. A rider since the tender age of 15, Bosum first discovered snocross after several years of competitive motocross racing.

“I was riding motocross since I turned five,” Bosum told the Nation. “I turned pro when I was 15, and before that every winter I went to Florida or Georgia to train, but each year it started to get more and more expensive. So eventually we made the decision to stay home because of education.”

While school came before motocross, it did not put an end to Bosum’s racing career. With the help of older brother Reggie, an accomplished snowmobile rider, Nathaniel filled the void by getting on a sled.

“It was the sport in our family,” continued Nathaniel. Indeed, Bosum’s other brother, Curtis, has also been active in competitive snowmobile racing. Meanwhile, Reggie, a long-time cross-country racer, is currently assisting his son Trevor in launching a budding snow rally career.

After leaving high school, Nathaniel stepped away from snocross for several years while pursuing a post-secondary education in marketing communications, but has steadily deepened his involvement in the sport after returning to action three years ago.

“My first season back I was limited by injury, so last year was my first full season, and things are going pretty good,” he said.

While the additional preparation paid dividends in his season-opening victory in Shawinigan, Bosum struggled at the second SCMx event of the season in Saint-Henri-de-Lévis, turning in a disappointing ninth-place finish, but remains confident going into the most important event of the circuit in Valcourt during the second weekend of February.

Held annually since 1983 and hosted by Bombardier, the Grand Prix Ski-Doo de Valcourt brings together over

30,000 spectators for a weekend of snowmobile, snocross, ATV and oval ice racing. In addition to riders from Quebec, the event also features riders from Ontario and the US, presenting Bosum and other Quebec riders with their biggest challenge of the season.

The SCMx circuit continues in Saguenay on the weekend of February 24-25 before moving on to Roberval March 3-4, and Baie-Comeau March 10-11, before wrapping up the season with La Soirée des Champions in La Dore on March 24-25.

Snowmobile action is also set to get underway in Eeyou Istchee during the months of February and March.

The Chisasibi Snowmobile Challenge runs February 15-18, with a \$50,000 first prize going to the winners of the two-man cross-country race. The action moves to Mistissini on the weekend of February 23-25 for this year’s Mistissini Cross-Country Championship. The annual Cross-Country Festival Folifret gets underway on March 3 with a 345-km race through boreal forest, and a popular 60-km event for antique snowmobile enthusiasts.

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Amnesty International has a simple message for the Quebec public inquiry into discrimination against Indigenous communities – provide proper services, fight discrimination and stop police violence.

Karine Gentelet, chairperson of Amnesty International Canada's francophone section, said she told the commission that they had documented "very systemic discrimination" against Indigenous women in Quebec. She urged

sion, which has heard from around 150 people in its 13 weeks of hearings.

The regional coordinator of the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association (CWEIA), Manon Richmond, said she wanted the commission to deal with the discrimination and the lack of trust many Cree feel in provincial public services.

Richmond has decided to put a lot of trust in the commission, recently accepting a position as a liaison officer, trying to get people to come to meetings, and preparing

*It's important to address
because we're human,
we all need to be respected, we all
need security and safety as humans*

- Manon Richmond, regional coordinator of the
Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association

Canada and Quebec to simply implement the international agreements they had signed onto, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Gentelet urged them to work closely with Indigenous organizations that are already familiar with the problems – and solutions.

Amnesty is one of many groups that have weighed in on the ongoing Public Inquiry Commission on Relations Between Indigenous Peoples and Certain Public Services, commonly referred to as the CERP. Many Cree individuals and organizations have given their testimony and recommendations to the commis-

sion, which has heard from around 150 people in its 13 weeks of hearings.

"I have faith that this is the beginning of an era of change, but it won't address all the needs related to safety and services, because it took many years to get here," Richmond said. "I have faith in the long run that this is a step forward."

She urged women to come forward and trust their gut: if someone "didn't treat you right, it's the time to come forward."

The CWEIA submission noted that many Cree suffered traumatic or unpleasant treatment that have "left them reluctant to either come forward or further utilize the public services located in these settings."



Betting on Change

The Quebec inquiry
into relations with Indigenous
people raises hopes

by Ben Powless

Photo by Catherine Berube-Leblanc

They urged the government to educate service providers about Indigenous rights and history, as well as ensuring that language no longer remained a barrier. As well, the association called for the decolonization of public services, by enshrining cultural rights in Quebec's Civil Code, which makes no mention of Aboriginal people.

Richmond also wants the commission to consult First Nations before submitting its final report to include their feedback. Too often, she says, Indigenous groups will see a final report, and wonder where the recommendations came from.

Cree School Board Chairperson Kathleen Wootton addressed the commission January 24. According to Wootton, young people can sometimes face overcrowding housing, which leads to difficulties in school. She says youth and their families might decide to move south, where they're at risk of even more serious problems.

There, they're more likely to fall victim to homelessness, violence and abuse, she said.

Wootton has heard stories of Cree who go to southern clinics only to be mistreated by doctors and nurses. "Sometimes I feel that First Nations are not considered as valuable or not treated as human beings," she said.

Wootton is pessimistic about dealing with some individuals, but is still hopeful that public services can improve. "You're always going to have people who are racist and ignorant, but at least public services connected to health will be able to learn and understand better how First Nations people are just as important."

Chief counsel to the commission, Christian Leblanc, says that the commission has heard testimony that deals with all six public services that commissioners are investigating, including police, corrections, legal, health and social services, and youth protection services.

So far, he said the commission has heard from a lot of experts, but they expect to hear from more citizens soon, whose testimony will require more investigation. The commission is meant

to submit its final report by December 2018.

Leblanc notes that the commission has already made two preliminary rec-

Individuals
were being
put in jail
**when they
couldn't
pay fines** in
Val-d'Or

ommendations, which are only issued to remedy situations that need immediate attention.

After the commission became aware that individuals were being put in jail when they couldn't pay fines in Val-d'Or, commissioners urged the city to stop this practice. In September, the commission issued a press release saying they were "pleased" that the city had taken steps to address this recommendation.

Leblanc said he's heard the concern that the rec-

ommendations will not be followed through by government.

He said that the more relevant, long lasting and practical their recommendations are, the more likely they will be followed. Leblanc also noted that the implementation of recommendations is often a matter of timing.

"Sometimes you recommend something, and society is not ready. Society then evolves, you recommend it again, and maybe society is ready," he said.

Karine Gentelet believes it takes continual pressure to prepare society and its government for change. While she thinks the commission is doing a "great job" so far, and confident they will have a good report, she's not as hopeful that the government will listen.

"It's a government – if we don't put pressure on them as citizens and non-governmental organizations, they won't do it," Gentelet said. "It will be a shame if the government pays for the commission and doesn't want to implement the recommendations."

walking through time

Footprints exhibit creating discussions with youth and Elders

by Nick Wapachee

Photos by Brendan Forward & Ian Diamond

“It’s really the core of who we are —
our ability to journey and maintain
that relationship with the land and
the animals that we live with”

- Sarah Pash, ACCI executive director

Yvonne Neeposh, a Cree Elder from Nemaska, said she felt she was walking down memory lane when she attended the Footprints: A Walk Through Generations exhibit with two of her granddaughters.

One tool in the exhibit that Neeposh remembers using is the kuskunaapii, a traditional fishing tool that uses a bone as a hook, moose hide as rope and a lean stick set on ice.

"I told them how we used traditional tools in the past to survive," she said. "That's how Crees used to catch fish during the winter. They didn't have metal hooks at the time."

The exhibit is a creation of the Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute in Oujé-Bougoumou that has been touring Eeyou Istchee since the New Year and will continue until the end of March.

Paula Menarick and Natasia Mukash curated the content. Their focus was on creating an exhibit that would help maintain Cree culture, language and history.

"The exhibit creates an environment for us to share our culture with each other, for Elders to share with youth, for people to discuss stories that have been passed down by their families," explained ACCI executive director Sarah Pash.

For the Crees of Eeyou Istchee it was important to travel within the territory. They were innovative in creating practical tools like snowshoes, toboggans and traveling with dog teams. Culture is celebrated through walking, such as the snowshoe walk ceremony and the walking-out ceremony.

"We all have stories, with our families about the trips our grandparents and great-grandparents made on foot, with dog teams, by canoe and portage," said Pash.

ACCI found that it was important to have a walking experience at the exhibit for others to see the Cree way of life, according to their community consultations.

"It's really the core of who we are – our ability to journey and maintain that relationship with the land and the animals that we live with," Pash emphasized.



"You learn 10 times better with an Elder talking to you about our culture"

- Sarah Pash



*“One day we
won’t be here,
like us Elders who
lived on the land”*

- Nemaska Cree elder Yvonne Neeposh



She said snowmobiles were introduced into the Cree culture to help travels become a short one. “It just means that we adapt them to our own use. They become part of our culture and the way we use them to express ourselves as Eeyouch in our territory.”

Nemaska Cree youth Shania Jolly said that some objects at the exhibit were different from what she’s used to seeing, but she was content knowing that Elders were having a dialogue with the youth.

“You learn 10 times better with an Elder talking to you about our culture,” she said.

Yvonne Neeposh is one of those Elders who worries about the future of Cree culture and language. “One day we won’t be here, like us Elders who lived on the land,” she observed ruefully.

For now, the ACCI exhibit is a living wealth of memory and education. Neeposh noticed a child’s rabbit-fur coat at the exhibit and remembers her mother making her one and passing the teaching down to her. “I used to make some for my daughter when she was a baby,” Neeposh said.

She told her granddaughters that the rabbit skin was used as thread to sew together fur coats and fur pants. Neeposh also noticed caribou shoes that were useful during wet snow or rain as they were waterproof.

“By the hip is where my dad used to cut the fur to make these shoes,” she noted.

Neeposh said that there was no store to buy clothes, but she would make them for her children. “We never wasted our clothes,” she said. “We would wash them and then cut them for our children’s size.”

Neeposh said that learning Cree culture and Cree language should be a priority for others, so it remains resilient. “We need to continue teaching our people so they can understand our way of life.”

The exhibit is expected to tour across Canada and the focus will be to share Cree history and Cree culture from an Eeyou perspective. The first stop will be at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau from May 2019 to January 2020.

The Canadian Premier Junior Hockey League is getting a big boost from First Nations hockey players and fans. After struggling through its inaugural season in 2016-2017, the CPJHL made its first foray into Quebec this year with the launch of the Maniwaki Mustangs.

Located 135 kilometres northeast of Ottawa adjacent to the Kitigan Zibi Reserve, Maniwaki is home to a growing Indigenous population. That reality is reflected on the Mustangs roster, which is largely comprised of First Nations players – including two from Eeyou Istchee, Brandon Wadden and Niko Trapper.

An 18-year-old from Waskaganish, Wadden debuted in the CPJHL with the Madawaska Valley Falcons before getting shipped to Maniwaki late in 2017. The change of address has not hurt



Cree players setting – and scoring – goals in fledgling CPJHL

by Daniel Coyle

Photos by Jonathan Levert of Image Nomade Productions

of goals including the opener in EDN's 6-4 win over Team Atlantic.

The emergence of Wadden as an elite player in the CPJHL ranks is no surprise to Maniwaki Mustangs president and owner Eric Gauthier, who seized the opportunity to add Wadden to the team roster when he became

While Gauthier would love to hang on to Wadden for as long as possible, that is not the mission of the CPJHL.

"We have been honest and upfront what our league is from day one," explain CPJHL president Bryan Elliott, in conversation with the Nation. "We are a junior developmental league. Our goal is to move players on to higher levels of junior, college or European hockey."

Gauthier believes Wadden has the talent to move to one of those higher levels. Wadden will turn 19 later this year, which could impact his chances at a shot to play major junior hockey in the QMJHL or OHL. However, Gauthier says he is working hard to help Wadden map out a career path that will allow him to develop his hockey talent well into his 20s.

Originally from Mistissini, Trapper moved to Chibougamau with his family at a young age, and is now enjoying success in his year with the Mustangs, scoring 14 goals and 19 assists through his first 17 outings.

Trapper caught the attention of hockey scouts at a young age, claiming rookie-of-the-year honours as a 14-year-old while playing Bantam hockey in Saguenay. Trapper turned 17 in early February, but age has not dulled his fiery style of play on the ice, which has earned him 33 penalty minutes and a number of games lost to injury.

Located 135 kilometres northeast of Ottawa adjacent to the Kitigan Zibi Reserve, Maniwaki is home to a **growing Indigenous population.** That reality is reflected on the Mustangs roster

Wadden, who leads the league with an impressive 42 goals through his first 17 contests, including a spectacular eight-goal performance in a 15-7 Falcons win over Ottawa on October 15.

Wadden also represented one of the few bright lights for Eastern Door and North at the 2017 National Aboriginal Hockey Championships, tallying a pair

available in early December.

"Steven Stamkos," quickly replied Gauthier, when asked to compare Wadden's style of play to the faces most familiar to hockey fans. "Brandon is an exceptional playmaker with a good shot. He is fast on his skates, handles the puck well and is very hard to play against in the middle of the ice."

Speeding MUSTANGS



"Steven Stamkos," quickly replied Gauthier, when asked to compare Wadden's style of play to the faces most familiar to hockey fans.

"Niko is a talent," said Gauthier enthusiastically. "At 6'2" and almost 200 pounds, he is an imposing force on the ice, especially for someone so young, but controlling that power and emotion will be important for him moving forward in his hockey career."

Trapper attended EDN camp in 2017, and has caught the attention of the AAA Gatineau Olympiques, who have expressed interest in giving the

youngster a try-out depending on how he performs in Maniwaki this season.

"I heard that the CPJHL was a good junior league to get into before taking the big step," said Trapper. "The Maniwaki Mustangs are a new team and I wanted to them to have a good start in the league with all the great players they have brought in."

He is enthusiastic about his new team. "There are ups and downs, but in hockey it's normal. I love how

the whole city of Maniwaki, and the Native community gets involved in our team, our family."

CPJHL president Bryan Elliott agrees, and puts a high value on the First Nations players playing around the league.

"First Nations players play a vital role in our league, and we are honoured that we are able to give them a stage to showcase their talents," Elliott said. "We have no special strat-

egy in place [to attract Aboriginal players]. We feel if our ownership groups provide what they promise to their players, then those players are our best recruiters and will tell their friends."

Judging by the early success of the Maniwaki Mustangs, there may be a future in the CPJHL for more young players from Eeyou Istchee as they continue their hockey journeys.

First Nations players play a vital role in our league, and we are honoured that we are able to give them a stage to showcase their talents

- CPJHL president Bryan Elliott

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Counting the milestones

The Cree Health Board reflects on four decades of operation

by Amy German

Created in 1978 as part of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement, the Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB) is using its 40th anniversary not only to commemorate its illustrious history but also as a means of assessing the objectives established in 2016.

So, while the CHB will celebrate its past accomplishments, it will address its continuing role in maintaining the health and well-being of the Cree Nation.

According to Communications Coordinator Katherine Morrow, the CHB's 2016 strategic regional plan sets targets that the organization uses to negotiate government funding.

"It is very important to define what services are available and how they are delivered," said Morrow.

In April, Waswanipi will host an assembly to address the issues the CHB faces and to celebrate its history and the people who contributed and who continue to contribute to the health of Crees.

"The Cree Health Board plans to celebrate its 40th with a series of 'Throwback

Thursday' posts on our Facebook and Instagram sites," said Morrow. "The Nation magazine helped by allowing us to dig through their photo archive and find

It is very important to define what services are available and how they are delivered

pictures used in past issues about Health Board activities, like wellness journeys, vaccination drives and grand openings. The story of the CHB is the story of the Cree Nation and the CHB is a pillar of Cree self-governance. Every single person in Eeyou Istchee has a link with the CHB."

Sol Awashish, a former employee, remembers what it was like to be in the communities before the formation of the CHB and remarked how things, particularly the focus on health, have changed dra-

that more public health was needed. Back then they had a couple of functions, one of them was to monitor diseases, do a lot of research and surveillance, and promote healthy lifestyles.

diabetes rate of 2.4%, and by the end of the decade, it had climbed to 5%.

"When I started working for the CHB in the late 90s, it was around 10%, and by 2011, the rate had risen to 27.8%,"

of complications and also looking at the kinds of chronic illnesses that patients could develop as a result of diabetes, such as heart disease and kidney failure.

"There is a big difference between Crees today and Crees of the past," said Awashish. "Our lifestyles have changed dramatically. My parents were nomadic hunters and fishermen. They moved around to do that and used a lot of energy getting from one place to the next. But today we have grocery stores and transportation. We can leave at 8 pm to go to our camps, which are already set up. In the old days, you had to pitch your tent and get boughs – there was a lot of work in setting up.

"It's just like how people don't cook anymore, everybody eats what I call 'Indian Salad,' which is poutine."

The Nation will highlight the CHB's 40th anniversary by focussing on the health and well being of the Cree throughout the year.

"There is a big difference between Crees today and Crees of the past, Our lifestyles have changed dramatically. My parents were nomadic hunters and fishermen. They moved around to do that and used a lot of energy getting from one place to the next. But today we have grocery stores and transportation. We can leave at 8 pm to go to our camps, which are already set up."

- Sol Awashish

matically since 1978.

"Back in the 1970s, the Montreal General Hospital handled us and helped us navigate public health," explained Awashish.

"In those days, public health really wasn't a big thing. It wasn't until the 1980s that the government decided

"In the late 70s and early 80s, the focus shifted from TB to the levels of mercury found in fish," Awashish noted.

Awashish said that it was through Public Health that they first noticed the spike in diabetes in the 1980s. In the early 1980s, Crees had a

said Awashish. "Mind you, every time you go out to do a screening, you are going to find what you are looking for and your numbers are going to spike."

Awashish said that his position at that point changed from focussing on diabetes prevention to the prevention

Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
Agence canadienne d'évaluation environnementale

North American Lithium Spodumene Mine Project
Public Comments Invited

February 5, 2018 — The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (the Agency) is conducting a federal environmental assessment of the proposed North American Lithium Spodumene Mine Project, located in La Corne, Quebec.

The Agency invites the public and Indigenous groups to comment on the Comprehensive Study Report, a document that includes the Agency's analysis and findings on whether the proposed project is likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects taking into account the implementation of mitigation measures.

All comments received will be considered public. Written comments in either official language must be submitted by **March 7, 2018** to:

North American Lithium Spodumene Mine Project
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency
901 - 1550 d'Estimauville Avenue
Quebec, Quebec G1J 0C1
Telephone: 418-649-6444
Email: QuebecLithium@ceaa-acee.gc.ca

To view the Comprehensive Study Report or for more information on the project, please visit the Agency's website at canada.ca/ceaa (Registry reference number 59158). Printed copies are also available at the following locations:

<p>Edifice de la maison de la culture 222 First Avenue East Amos, Quebec</p>	<p>Barraute Municipal Library 660 First Street West Barraute, Quebec</p>
<p>Council of the Nation Anishnabe of Lac Simon Natural Resources Department 1026 boulevard Cicip Lac Simon, Quebec</p>	<p>Council of the First Nation of Abitibiwinini 55 Migwan Street Pikogan, Quebec</p>

As a next step, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change will consider the Comprehensive Study Report, along with comments received from the public and Indigenous groups and decide whether the project is likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects.

For more information on the Agency's privacy policies, consult the Privacy Notice on its website at canada.ca/ceaa.

The Proposed Project
North American Lithium Inc. proposes the development of an open pit operation to mine 3,800 tonnes of spodumene (a lithium mineral) per day until 2030. The project is located in the southeastern part of the regional county municipality of Abitibi, in the municipality of La Corne. The project includes a refinery for the extraction of lithium carbonate from spodumene, and the impoundment and storage areas required throughout the mine operating phase.

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CHIBOUGAMAU

Hybrids on the move

Montreal Car Show showcases the future in road travel

Story and photos by Prem Lee Prasannam

The 2018 Montreal Car Show offered the car enthusiast a true overview of the automobile innovations of the last 100 years. For example, the first Ford Model-T engine built in 1908 was capable of running on normal gasoline, kerosene or ethanol. The development of automobile technology did not gain much momentum for decades.

The exhibit, held January 19-28 at Montreal's Palais des congrès, demonstrated that hybrid technology is finally finding market space in the auto sector. A range of technologically advanced prototypes and production models were lined up in the show: gas-electric hybrids, plug-in electric hybrids, 100% electric and even cars running on hydrogen fuel cells.

The long wait for practical and affordable electric cars is finally over. Even though electric technology is booming in the European and some Asian markets, the North American market is still hesitant to move quickly in that direction. At the opening gate, Mitsubishi displayed its Plug-In Hybrid Electric Vehicle (PHEV) SUV. This has been a big success story in Japan and the European market since 2013.

This PHEV is a 4x4 SUV and has the same performance as its gasoline-powered Outlander counterpart. The battery-only range claims to run at least 50kms on one charge. The 2-litre gasoline engine kicks in and acts as a generator to power the battery when its power is drained. So no anxiety during

long drives about power blackout and towing.

The Outlander PHEV has a starting price of \$44,817. Mitsubishi has done its homework to attract the environmentally conscious customers without compromising the basic luxury and comfort of a traditional 4x4 SUV. They brilliantly managed to pack all the goodies in an affordable price range. Surprisingly the Mitsubishi Grand Tourer Concept from the 2017 Montreal Car Show was not present this year. Let us hope the next generation Mitsubishi PHEV will inherit some of the nice styling elements of this concept.

Toyota demonstrated a clear lead in the North American hybrid-car segment. The hybrid models in Highlander, RAV4 and Prius were all priced below \$52,000. The Plug-in Prius and the Hydrogen fuel cell were newcomers this year. Toyota's long-term direction is visible in its models, technology and smart pricing. Honda Clarity PHEV is the new entrant this year. With an impres-

sive electric-only mileage of 76kms, this car has a starting price tag of \$39,900.

In the Japanese luxury segment, Lexus lined up smaller version cars ranging from the IS series starting at \$43,590 to the top-end hybrid car LS 500h at \$136,590. Among the SUVs, the RX series displayed a hybrid model with a starting price of \$73,440.

The Korean KIA showed Optima in their PHEV line-up. The price starts at \$44,670 with a fuel economy up to 6.0 / 5.1 City/HWY (L/100km). The electric Soul EV starting at \$37,470 with a range of 170kms. Among the performance vehicles, the Stinger came at \$45,870 with a 365 HP/376 lb. ft. torque.

In the German cars, Audi's e-tron 1.4 TFSI Progressiv PHEV was priced at \$40,900. The overall experience was nice. I hope Audi can improve the 15-mile electric range to target a wider audience with this price tag. In the sedan category, the A3 model started at \$45,300 while the high-end A8 started at \$86,150.



The BMW Plug-In electric XDrive40e in the X5 category SUV shows the sportiness, ruggedness and comfort.



Audi R8 V10 has a unique styling with nice curves and an aggressive look. The sleek interior makes the driver feels like you are in an airplane cockpit. The V10 engine will produce 610hp, can hit 0-100 km/hr in 3.3 seconds and has a starting price of \$214,900.

The BMW Plug-In electric XDrive40e in the X5 category SUV shows the sportiness, ruggedness and comfort. Its engine produces 241hp and 258 lb ft of torque with a fuel consumption of 10.2 for city and 9.5 on highway. The base price starts at \$77,802. The BMW's i3 comes as a city car with an electric range of 130-160kms starting at \$47,500. With a gas-engine range extender option, the car will get a maximum of 250kms and starts at \$52,000. The new entrant was the X2 with a base price of \$44,852.

In European segment, the Volvo showcased a plug-in hybrid version in all models from sedan to SUV. The XC60 SUV has a base model price at \$43,650 and the top-end hybrid version comes at \$71,850. I hope the Swedish company will soon find ways to bring the hybrids to the competitor's price range. The Land Rover Discovery showed the classic bold appearance with the signature Land Rover design characters.

Among American vehicles, Chevrolet and Ford have displayed moderately priced models in the electric segment. The 100% electric, Chevrolet Bolt EV boasted a 300+ km range. The plug-in hybrid Volt appeared decent looking with fine interior gadgets. The Chevy Volt with an

electric range of 85 kms was priced at \$38,590.

In the SUV segment, the 8-seater Chevy Traverse started at \$37,040 with integrated 4g LTE, wifi, Apple CarPlay or Android Auto. The GMC Acadia with a 4-wheel drive option base version started at \$39,040 and the top-end Yukon Denali started at \$84,670. If luxury comes with space, this is meant for you.

In trucks, the Dodge Ram 1500 Laramie Limited 4x4 was quite attractive. The chrome grill and bumper on a truck of this size was stunning. The base price listed was \$57,915. The red-coloured Ram 2500 Power Wagon looked sporty and powerful with a price tag of \$56,665. In the mid-size pickup truck, the GMC Canyon Terrain stood out with the sporty sidebars and footboards.

In the high-end models, the little-known Karma Revero was there with a base price of \$156,000. It claims an 80-km range per charge. The petrol engine will recharge the battery to give up to a 482-km range. The Midnight Sapphire Rolls Royce Dawn was listed with a sales price of \$570,642 and Lamborghini Huracan Spyder with 610HP at \$309,895.

It is a positive trend that car manufacturers are beginning to switch to environmentally friendly options for buyers at affordable pricing. The 2018 Montreal Car Show surely exhibited that electric momentum from the entry levels to luxury categories. The future of electric vehicles and new generation technology seems to be promising for all buyers.

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December 12-13, 2017	Waskaganish First Nation	KKL Conference Room	6:30 - 9:30pm
January 16-17, 2018	Cree Nation of Eastmain	Administration Building	7:00 - 10:00pm
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A real winter

by Sonny Orr

It was a spectacular winter day, our snowmobiles chugging along faithfully just north of Paint Hills, around Comb Island. The ptarmigan were scarce and scared, but we managed to bag a number of them before we decided to make fire and drink tea. We crested a hilltop and my uncle, who I accompanied a lot that winter, had descended down the other side and parked his machine on the leeward side. I knew it was time for some tobacco and I quickly sidled up beside him. Since the clear skies promised no snow, it also became a cutting cold that was hard to keep out of our snowsuits.

Out of the wind, I stepped off my machine for a whizz. I quickly collapsed into armpit deep snow and had to practically swim back. After a good laugh, we headed to the safety of the thick woods to warm up a bit, sip hot tea and heat up the bannock. Later that night, we arrived home to get ready for another foray the following day. Such was the life of hunting, snaring and trapping. No real deadlines except for the opening face-off on Hockey Night in Canada every Saturday.

Thinking about another bout with Old Man Winter, after decades of complaining about missing ice, little snowfall, early springs and all that has to do with mild weather, the mother of all continuous snowfall fell, unfortunately, in southern Quebec.

I remember trying to go shopping at the local shopping malls and we couldn't find the stores and gave up. We drove past tunnels that were supposed to be driveways and sidewalks were unseen from the 16-foot hill of snow that accumulated over the past month. Rooftops were barely visible and you could sense the frustration of the people. Eventually, I took a cab to the mall, cleverly hidden behind a massive 30-foot high mountain range of piled snow.

Now, I know that today's weather is called many different names and is measured to the millibar and so accurately gives you a forecast that you can depend on as an excuse to take the day off. Many employers are feeling the pinch as their trusted workers fail to show up on time

It's the same for the consumer. It's hard to get around in person now, so why not let the mailman do all the work and deliver your purchases to the doorstep? The virtues of the virtual mall – no need to face Mother Nature anymore. It started with the sophisticated delivery systems of the pizzerias, and now, you don't even have to go anywhere when the world is at your fingertips and anything, I mean anything, can be bought and delivered within 24 hours.

Soon, it will be warm enough to go outside and walk around like lost sheep, wondering how the world could look so different in real life. Yes, it's time to bring back the outdoors to the indoors and wake up the inner explorer in you to venture where no digital imprint of your life can be seen.

If you really want to go off-grid and enjoy life (and in many cases, life and death) to its fullest, leave the generator off unless you absolutely need to fire up your coffee pot and have a classy espresso. Or perhaps, for the best reason of all: Hockey Night in Canada.



Under the Northern Sky

February blues

by Xavier Kataquapit



The February blues affects everyone differently. I am starting to feel the effects of cabin fever from my comfortable desk chair inside my small home office. I've been in front of my computer for days typing during my working hours and watching TV on my off hours. My free time is spent inside the house because I am writing these days and still recovering from a nasty flu. I don't have a wood stove as my heat comes from a gas pipeline and

When it gets quiet in your home, put on some of your favourite music, even if it is just playing in the background, recent **research indicates it will always put you in good mood.**

that means I don't have to cut down trees or split and carry logs. My traditional harvesting is all about heading up to the grocery store once or twice a week. I can't do any outside renovations on my house because it's too cold and I don't want to start anything inside because I would have no relief from the dust. I love winter but as I age the cold weather is becoming a challenge.

It wasn't like this when I was growing up in the north. Every morning was a daily chore of stoking the flames of our wood stove. The stove heated our three-bedroom home which housed nine children and my parents. After a hot daily breakfast of oatmeal, we trudged to school in the bitter cold and when we returned in the afternoon, mom set us to our daily chores. We would have to fetch wood for the

wood bin inside the house. The older siblings would have to split larger pieces of wood or make kindling.

We also had no running water so the honey bucket (our portable toilet) would have to be emptied every day before dark. One of us would be tasked with carrying the filthy bucket out into the cold and to the outhouse behind our home. You might be surprised that we were still living like this in Attawapiskat into the early 1990s.

On a weekly basis, we had to fetch snow from the land because it was the best way to collect fresh drinking water. We kept a large drum next to the wood stove where the pure crystalline snow would melt into water. Even though we kept a healthy stock of firewood, dad or my older brothers would head out every week to collect more logs, just in case we needed them.

We spent more time outdoors because we had to. Now with modern conveniences, I don't have many reasons to step outside. I think that is one of the reasons why midwinter is a difficult time of year for many people. We are all stuck inside our homes and away from the sun, the fresh air and the elements.

To cope with the February blues and the lack of sun, we have to work at keeping ourselves positive and happy. I suggest people go out for a short walk. If you do head out, make sure you are dressed for the cold by putting on a double layer of clothes. Meet a friend for a coffee nearby or go to their house for a change to get some company. When it gets quiet in your home, put on some of your favourite music, even if it is just playing in the background, recent research indicates it will always put you in good mood.

Diet plays a big role in how healthy we feel, so take it easy on the fatty foods, salt intake, sugar and caffeine. The cold tends to make us crave fatty foods but if we are sitting and not doing

a lot at home, it's better to not eat as much.

For those who have internet access, look up some simple lessons on Tai Chi, an ancient Chinese form of martial arts for exercise and meditation. My favourite is a Tai Chi instructor named Don Fiore, who posts his lessons on YouTube.

Head out into the wilderness to view the natural beauty of the winter wonderland. There is no better meditation than being out on the land and even in the freezing cold. In the daytime, the scenery on the ground is beautiful, and at night, under a clear cold sky, it is mesmerizing. The fresh air and the fragrant pine trees and brush will put you in a good mood.

February is only as blue as we make it.

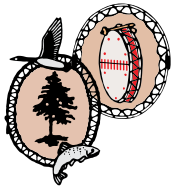


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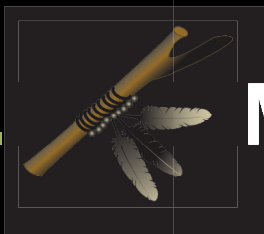
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